



Getting Started with Essay Writing

Begin early

You can't write a successful essay unless you give yourself enough time to read, research, think and write. Don't procrastinate or leave it until the last minute; start as early as possible.

Define the question and analyse the task

Writing down everything you know about a topic won't make a good academic essay. Analysing, then answering the essay's question or task is central.

- Be sure that you understand exactly what the question requires you to do.
- Identify the key words (like discuss or analyse) and clarify the approach you are required to take.



See The Learning Centre guide [Answering assignment questions](#).

Write a preliminary essay plan

Your starting point for an essay is your initial response to the topic or question. This response is based on what you already know. However, this is only the starting point. You then need to research, question your response and find some answers.

- Work out your initial thoughts and ideas about the topic and **write a quick, preliminary essay plan** to help guide your research.
- An essay plan can help you work out how you will answer the question and which information you will use. Essay plans also help with structuring an essay.
- Remember, your plan at this point is provisional. As you begin to write and research it will probably change.



See The Learning Centre guide [Essay and assignment planning](#).



See next: [Researching the topic](#)

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